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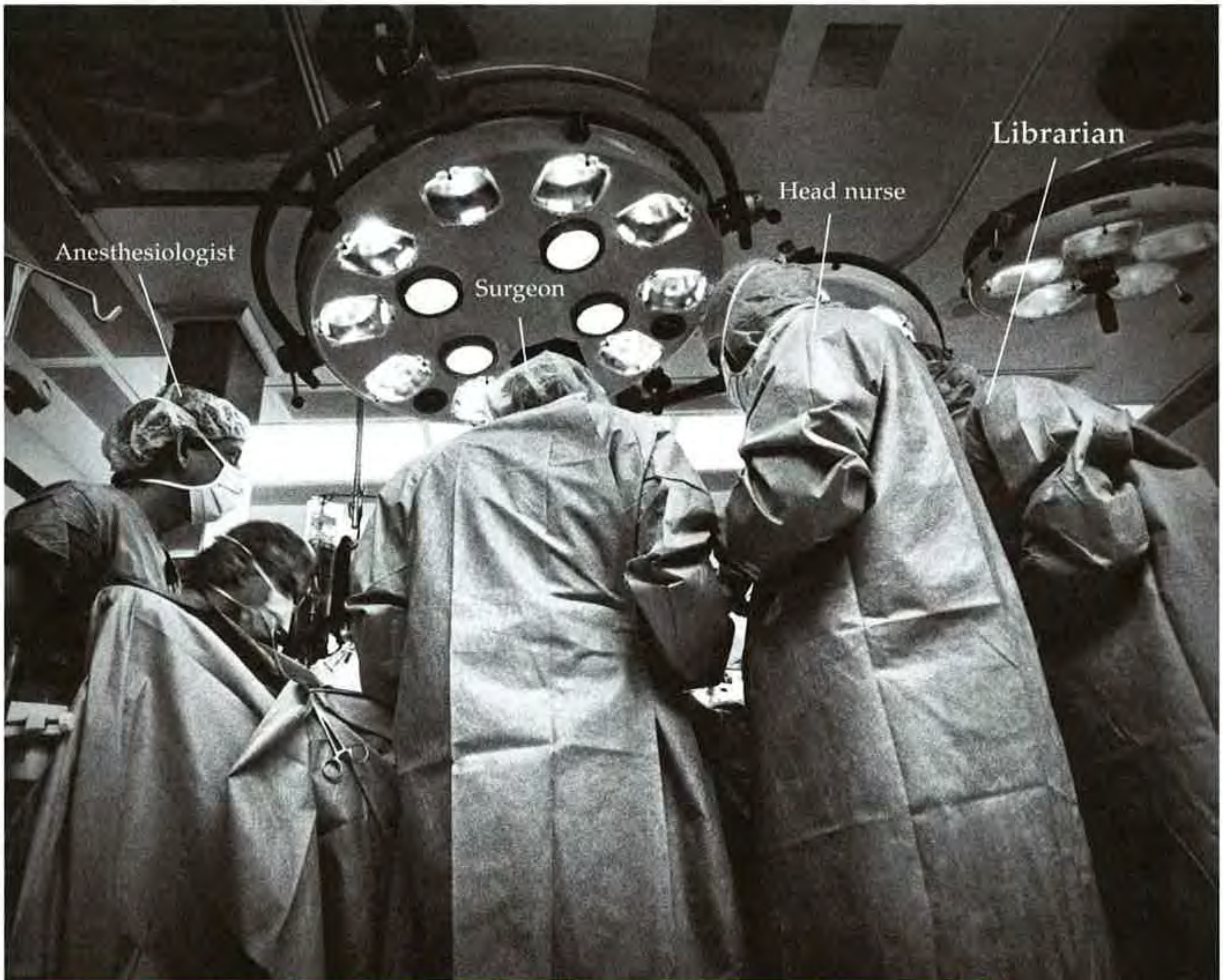
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information outlook

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Vol. 7, No. 4
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The Branding Process

The focus of this month's *Information Outlook* is branding. The contributors to this issue have done an excellent job of describing the branding process and outlining several best practices. Branding is a very complicated process; too often, the concept gets entangled with marketing and naming, and the real purpose, intent, and value of branding are lost.

Branding is tied to relationships and perceptions. One of our key successes lies in the interpersonal relationships we form through this association; however, the name of our organization does not reflect that fact. I personally believe that it is time for an organizational name change for the Special Libraries Association and for a commitment to a complete brand strategy.

Take a moment to think about your own professional brand. What does it mean to you? How do you see yourself? What does your brand mean to others? How do you want others to perceive you?

Do you

- Clearly articulate your brand identity? Your brand stands for something and conveys a message. Understanding your own professional brand is a key component of the process. In order for your customers to interpret your brand value, you must be able to clearly articulate your brand identity. Your customers have more information, more choices, and more access than ever before; thus, they have higher expectations.
- Establish a customer value proposition and use it to guide your work? You need to deliver your services in line with your brand identity. Who are your major consumers and what are their needs?
- Create the competitive advantage? Is your brand better than the competition's? Your customers come to you because you are different from anyone else in some way. The services and experiences you offer to customers should be unique and involve an expected level of quality, trust, and convenience. The competition may offer similar services, but they should not be able to match your expertise and knowledge.
- Define the optimal customer experience? Find out what attracts your customers and why are they loyal to you. You need to create a consistent and compelling experience each and every time you interact with your customers.
- Cultivate customer relationships? You need to listen attentively to what you are being told, understand the customer, and respond accordingly.
- Strengthen your brand over time? You are constantly evolving as a professional, so you need to create ongoing relevance by consistently and continually fine-tuning your brand in line with your customers' expectations and needs.

Our customers have said repeatedly that it is time to tweak our brand to create ongoing relevance. I encourage each and every one of you to support SLA's brand strategy at the annual business meeting in June. What we learn from our association's branding strategies can enhance the brand strategy of every member who successfully brands his or her skills and value.

Lynn Smith

Lynn Smith, SLA Acting Executive Director

making news

chapter & division news

Military Librarians Division: 50 Years of Partnership with SLA

2003 marks 50 years of cooperation and partnership between SLA and the Military Librarians Division. The Military Librarians Division brings together those interested in the betterment of military library service. It is a forum within SLA for the exchange of ideas and information on military library management and was conceived to help members improve services to their constituencies. The libraries represented by MLD cross many disciplines: academia (military academies and senior service schools); law (Judge Advocate General schools, general counsel); science and technology (research and development centers, service labs, Naval Observatory, weather, communications, computer projects); health (general hospitals, patient libraries, medical schools, safety, environmental); and public libraries for families on military bases. MLD library staffs work to support a successful national defense.

At the Annual Conference in New York City, look for us in blue polo shirts with the gold MLD logo. Stop by the Morgan suite, across from the registration desk, and celebrate with us in a military-style cake-cutting ceremony at 3 pm, Monday, June 9, 2003.

Cincinnati Chapter Celebrates 75th Anniversary

On October 10, 2002, the Cincinnati Chapter celebrated its 75th anniversary with a Diamond Jubilee Gala at The Phoenix in downtown Cincinnati. Chapter members and guests socialized, tried their skills at a chapter history quiz, and viewed mementos. The chapter history was updated for the occasion.

The gala included dinner, live music, and a program with door prizes and honors for past presidents. Bill Fisher, president of the Special Libraries Association, spoke on "Return on Investment" and answered questions about the direction of the national organization.

From its beginnings on May 12, 1927, when a small group of librarians met at the Procter & Gamble Library, the Cincinnati Chapter has grown to more than 100 members. The chapter has hosted the national SLA conference twice, as well as providing local member services ranging from serials union lists to a lecture session "to clear up many questions concerning the possibility of an atomic bomb attack on Cincinnati" (co-sponsored with the Public Library of Cincinnati).

sla news

Salonen Elected President Of The Special Libraries Association

Ethel M. Salonen is the new president-elect of the Special Libraries Association (SLA). Salonen is the manager of external content at Millennium Pharmaceuticals, Cambridge, MA. Salonen has more than 29 years experience in the information services industry. Her experience includes professional positions at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, the University of California at Riverside, Arthur D. Little, Inc., and KPMG LLP. She has held sales and sales management positions with Dialog Information Services, Inc. and Primark Financial Information Division. She is also the owner of Ollin Associates, a knowledge and information management services firm.

She is actively involved with SLA and NENON (New England Online Users Group) in local and global capacities. Her most recent awards include SLA Fellow (2001) and a SLA President's Award (2002). In 2002, she served as Chair of the SLA Conference Planning Committee.

Salonen and the newly elected members of SLA's Board of Directors will be installed June 11, 2003 at SLA's 94th Annual Conference in New York, NY. Current President-elect Cynthia V. Hill will also be sworn-in as the 84th President of SLA. Salonen will serve as President-elect of SLA until June 2004, when her one-year term as SLA president begins.

Others elected to the SLA Board of Directors for the 2003-2004 Association year are:

Chapter Cabinet chair-elect: Jacqueline B. Knuckle, Medical Librarian, Chestnut Hill Hospital, Philadelphia, PA.

Division Cabinet chair-elect: Brent Mai, Director of Library Services, Concordia University, Portland, OR.

Treasurer: Gloria J. Zamora, Manager, Government Relations Department, Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, NM.

At-Large Directors: Renee A. Massoud, Director of Business Research Services for KPMG LLP, Montvale, NJ; Lynne K. McCay, Assistant Director for Information Research, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

IMLS to Survey Training Programs for Library Staff

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) will conduct a study to identify and analyze education and training programs for non-MLS-degreed library staff in the United States (e.g., preprofessional, paraprofessional, library technicians, media specialists). Although the basic credential for professional library service is the master's degree in library science, non-degreed library staff perform a range of duties in an array of settings—public, academic, school, and "special" libraries throughout the country. Their responsibilities continue to evolve as libraries increase their use of new technologies. IMLS is responding to the library community's need to know what training opportunities exist to prepare library workers.

IMLS has hired Caliber Associates to produce an inventory of training opportunities. A national list of courses and programs is being compiled using Web-based research and consultation with library leaders. Detailed information about program and course offerings will be gathered this spring using a Web-based survey. The inventory will explore:

- the wide range of institutions offering such programs and coursework, including colleges and universities; community colleges; state library agencies; vocational and technical schools; library consortia/cooperatives; state library associations; and commercial training organizations/vendors; and
- the modes of delivery, including face-to-face (classroom) instruction, distance learning (via traditional correspondence as well as Web-based coursework), and combinations of the two.

SLA Virtual Seminar—Organic Approach to Project Management

Projects are an important feature of the new organizational landscape, but managing them can be a major challenge if you're unclear on why a project is being started, what work it involves, or how the work is to be done. Unfortunately, getting clear answers to such important questions can be difficult in today's fast-moving workplace. In the SLA Project Management Virtual Seminar, you will participate in an interactive, action-oriented, and entertaining experience that will get you started on creating an environment for successful projects. You'll learn the core concepts of project management, including how success comes when you place your focus on people.

Speaker: Randy Englund
Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2003
Times: 2:00–3:30 pm ET
To register, go to www.sla.org/content/Events/distance/virtsem2003/index.cfm.

When you register, your location becomes a virtual seminar site, and you can host as many people as you like for one low site fee, so be sure to invite your colleagues to learn with you!

Virtual Seminar Only
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V-Pak Only
The V-Pak includes an audiotape of the session, hardcopy of handouts, and instructions on how to access the PowerPoint presentation on the Web.
Member $95 Nonmember $145

IMLS will release a report analyzing the findings and identifying characteristics of successful programs in late summer 2003. For more information, go to http://www.imls.gov/whatsnew/current/010803.htm.

Correction (March 2003 Issue)

We mistakenly excluded the name of Trudy Katz as one of the 2003 Fellows of the Special Libraries Association. Katz is Vice President of the Information Center at MasterCard International, Purchase, NY. The 2003 Awards and Honors winners will be recognized at the Awards Reception on Sunday, June 8th during the SLA 94th Annual Conference in New York, NY.

$25,000 Endowment Honors UNC Couple

In recognition of their service to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and to the state, the North Caroliniana Society has created a $25,000 endowment in the names of Alice and Jerry Cotten, longtime employees of the North Carolina Collection at Wilson Library. Alice Cotten is a member of the North Carolina Chapter of SLA and of the Museums Arts & Humanities Division.

The Cottens spent a combined 60 years as reference librarians, collecting, cataloging, and caring for library materials and helping thousands of students, scholars, journalists, and others use them.

The North Caroliniana Society's members maintain a strong interest in preserving and expanding what is known about North Carolina. Interest from the endowment will be used to promote the study of novelist, playwright, and Asheville native Thomas Wolfe and to preserve photographs related to the state.

Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism

The Oklahoma City National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) is dedicated to preventing and deterring terrorism or mitigating its effects. The MIPT Library web site (www.mipt.org) is one of the most comprehensive websites relating to terrorism available. MIPT is a Congressionally funded 501 (C) (3) independent, nonprofit organization primarily responsible for research and development in counterterrorism. For more information, go to www.mipt.org or contact SLA member Brad Robison, library director, at 405-278-6311 or by e-mail at robison@mipt.org.

industry news

Dialog Seeks Scholarship Applicants

Dialog, a provider of online-based information services and integrated information solutions, is seeking applicants from North America for the 2003 Roger K. Summit Scholarship, the company's scholarship program for graduate students in library and information sciences. The $5,000 North American prize will be awarded at the SLA Annual Conference in June 2003. Applications are available at http://training.dialog.com/gep/scholarship.html.

Dialog awards three scholarships annually, one each in North America, the Europe and Middle East region, and the Asia Pacific region. Later in the year, Dialog will accept applications for the European scholarship, to be awarded at London Online in December 2003, and for a scholarship to be awarded in Asia Pacific in 2004.

Settlement in Copyright Infringement Suit

Elsevier, Inc., MIT Press, Sage Publications, and Wiley Periodicals have settled their copyright infringement litigation against Los Angeles-based Westwood Copies, which has agreed to pay an undisclosed amount in damages for unauthorized copying of publications. In the future, Westwood Copies will comply with all copyrights owned by the plaintiffs and will promptly pay associated royalties.

Westwood was charged with producing unauthorized coursepacks for courses taught at the University of Los Angeles. Copyright compliance is an area of heightened focus in the publishing industry, whether it involves traditional technology such as photocopying or the use of the Internet, e-mail, and electronic document formats.

Five Major Publishers File Copyright Infringement Suit Against Paradigm

Elsevier, MIT Press, University of Chicago Press, Sage Publications, and John Wiley & Sons have joined in a suit against coursepack producers in Texas, Minnesota, and Illinois. The suit charges that the defendants routinely photocopied materials from their publications without authorization. The defendants operate copy shops near the campuses of several colleges and universities in Minnesota and Texas, including Paradigm Books in Austin and

Paradigm Course Resource in Minneapolis, and the suit alleges that one or more of the defendants are also doing business near the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, under the name Notes & Quotes.

The primary purpose for which the defendants copy the publishers' materials is the preparation and sale of coursepacks. Copy shops may not reproduce and sell coursepacks without permission from the rightholders.

This case is the latest in a series of cases being coordinated by Copyright Clearance Center, a provider of rights management services for the authorized reproduction and distribution of copyrighted materials, and a licensing agent for all five publishers.

MicroPatent Releases Saved WorkSheets with Annotations

MicroPatent, a subsidiary of Information Holdings Inc. and provider of searchable full-text patent information, has launched Saved WorkSheets, an upgrade to its PatSearch' FullText WorkSheets. Users can still access the standard WorkSheets features, including sorting, graphing, reports, sorting by family, and deduplicating the document, but will now be able to save search results as worksheets that can be named and/or appended to an existing document.

For more information on Saved WorkSheets, PatSearch FullText, or Document Delivery, contact MicroPatent in the United States at 203-466-5055 or info@micropat.com, or in London at 44-0-20-7450-5105 or eu@micropat.com.

Dialog Adds Trademark Images to TRADEMARKSCAN®

Dialog has added images to the TRADEMARKSCAN® files from Finland and Sweden. The company's portfolio of trademark files from Scandinavia and elsewhere in the world are used by legal professionals, researchers, competitive intelligence specialists, marketing managers, and others to research and track intellectual property issues.

All European trademark databases, as well as the International Register database of trademark information published by the World Intellectual Property Organization, are now updated on a weekly schedule.

Branding Our Association: A New Name—A New Vision

By Cindy Romaine

Cindy Romaine graduated from the University of Washington Library and Information School in 1982. She has worked in many positions in special, academic, and public libraries. She has been the "Librarian of the Stars" at the Nike Design Library for the past 13 years.

The Branding Task Force Report

THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION IS IN THE MIDST OF REEXAMINING **the who, what, and how of our future. From this reexamination and reflection we hope to more accurately align with the skills and talents of our members and more aggressively embrace the opportunities for the information professional in the 21st century.**

The board of directors appointed a Branding Task Force two-and-a-half years ago with the charge of gaining a clear understanding of our association's value proposition to its various audiences for years to come, including the possibility of a new name for the association.

When the board met at the 2003 winter Leadership Summit in New Orleans, it passed a resolution to put two name possibilities before the general membership at the Annual Business Meeting in June. A tremendous amount of research and consultation, as well as focus groups, polls, surveys, and discussions, have brought the organization to this crossroads. At the core of the discussion is a realization that our brand has not evolved as quickly as the association it represents. We need to take the equity built up in special librarianship and move it forward, and there is certain urgency about implementing this strategy in order to keep our identity clearly in focus.

> **Every brand has at its core a substance that gives it strength. You have to understand it before you can grow it.**
>
> **—Scott Bedbury, *A New Brand World*[1]**

Core Values

If you think of the association as a brand, and you reflect on its substance, you have to ask yourself, what are the core values that give this organization its strength and unique position? Put another way, when you peel away the name, the logo, and the history, what is at the core?

Over and over again, one concept stood out as the Branding Task Force communicated with members about what draws them to SLA. In a word, and almost unanimously, the biggest draw is the people. The unique relationships, networks, and opportunities that this organization provides are the logical result of having thousands of outstanding individuals working toward the same goals. SLA provides a forum to connect with professionals who are experiencing similar problems, looking for common opportunities, and facing equivalent challenges. Fostering communication is the single greatest benefit of the organization.

Unique Strengths

To look at our core values from a historical perspective, consider the words of John Cotton Dana, one of SLA's founders. Dana stated, at the establishment of our association, that the unique features of special libraries are their ability (1) to acquire the information an organization needs, regardless of format; (2) to customize that information to make it useful to as many people in the organization as possible; and (3) to recognize when that information is no longer applicable, discard it, and move on to something more appropriate.[2]

Are these values applicable to the information professional in the 21st century? Do they still define our skills and capture our values? It is the consensus of the Branding Task Force that these values are applicable and that they should continue to be the core values from which the organization draws its strength. Translating these values into 21st century terms, our essential core values are that information professionals in special settings provide services to unique clients, customize resources, formats, and services, and adapt to future needs.

Over the past two years, the task force has heard from a large number and wide variety of members. A clear majority of members agree that our current name and logo do not adequately reflect the breadth of our brand. What changes can we make?

Branding

We hear a lot about branding, but what is it? How does it work? For a definition, forget Webster's. Everyone knows at least one example of branding: "taking a red-hot poker with a fancy design on it and slapping it on a bawling baby calf."

Nothing quite that painful is being considered for our organization, we promise! In the context of a not-for-profit professional organization, a helpful definition of branding is found in the writing of Scott Bedbury, who worked to shape brand identity at both Nike and Starbucks. In *A New Brand World*, he writes, "Branding is about taking something common and improving upon it in ways that make it more valuable and meaningful."[3] Branding is about differentiating products and services for a unique position in the consumer's eye. Another brand maven, Tom Peters, says, "the brand is a promise of the value you'll receive."[4]

A NEW NAME

On the SLA website we say, "We are committed to professional excellence and we value:

- Our clients and our ability to respond to their needs, adding value to information services and products.
- Continuous learning and professional development.
- New paradigms of information service and delivery, and the opportunities they provide for our continued role in the information economy.
- The use of technology to enhance our jobs, our organizations, and society.
- Opportunities for networking—for us to meet, communicate, and collaborate.
- The leadership role of the Special Libraries Association.
- The Association's efforts to help us strengthen our roles as information leaders in our organizations and in our communities.
- The role of the Association in the development of information policies."[5]

A NEW VISION

Our brand proposition, including the name, logo, programming, publicity—in fact, every way that we touch our consumers, both actual and potential—needs to express these core values. Rebranding allows us to be dynamic in our programs and services but consistent and focused in our value proposition. The connection we make with decisionmakers is only as effective as the message we deliver. Consistency of values, message, and mission will help us build connections.

Why Now?

Why is the Branding Task Force recommending that we rebrand the organization now? Fundamental changes have occurred in the tools we use and the services we provide, and, therefore, in the skills and competencies we require. The organization is at what Andy Grove, former CEO of Intel, calls a "strategic inflection point"—that is, a critical juncture in our evolution.[6]

Given the digital revolution of the past 10 years, the association is in danger of no longer being aligned with the skills and opportunities of the information professional in the 21st century. Technology has been a tremendously disruptive force on the library and information industry. Disruption, depending on your point of view, can have beneficial as well as detrimental implications. On one hand, librarianship is not as clearly defined as it was 30 years ago. But 30 years ago the electric library we live in today was beyond our wildest dreams. We are able to provide services now that were unthinkable then, or—if we could have accomplished them—they would have taken considerably longer to provide.

Another reason to consider rebranding the organization now is our demographics. By some estimates, more than 50 percent of librarians in the field will retire in less than 10 years, and the number of students entering the field is insufficient to cover this shortfall. For the organization to remain relevant, we must maintain healthy growth from outside our current ranks—we must be more inclusive of information professionals who are not strictly regarded as "librarians."

Task Force Findings

The Branding Task Force has listened closely to the membership and examined branding issues for two-and-a-half years (see sidebar for chronology page 16). We are an organization with many unique clients and a wide variety of content, so of course there is not 100 percent agreement in our opinions. But our research (polling, listening, and consultation) shows that a clear majority of SLA members favor change.

In June 2003, the general members attending the Annual Business Meeting will be given the opportunity to vote for a new name that better reflects the core values, strengths, and opportunities of this organization. The two options will be "Information Professionals International" and "SLA" (just the initials).

The following is a summary of the results of the task force's findings (see also http://www.sla.org/content/SLA/assocbrand/index.cfm).

FOCUS ON SERIALS

Recent events have caused understandable anxiety regarding the reputations of serials vendors. From time to time when turmoil in our industry has caused concern, we have chosen to speak out to share our position and comment on the subscription agency industry. This message does not address the possible outcome of EBSCO's planned purchase of RoweCom's operations. We will inform the library and publisher communities as soon as these pending transactions are concluded.

E. Dixon Brooke, Jr., Vice President, Division General Manager EBSCO Subscription Services

We realize the much publicized and dramatic demise of one of the large international serials vendors triggers concern about our industry. Those in the library community are asking questions that are natural outgrowths of the situation. Questions like, "How could this happen? Is it likely to happen again? Is there any stability among agents? Can I trust my library's valued funds to them? Is it safe to take advantage of prepayment options to maximize buying power?"

The current situation is serious, with far-reaching and damaging effects on many libraries. However, this has occurred with only *one* vendor. Those who have been a part of the library/vendor/publisher community for any length of time will remember that this same company has been involved in each of the past threats of instability, which were caused either by its changes in ownership and/or by its unsettled financial footing. These problems have not plagued subscription vendors as a whole and certainly not EBSCO.

EBSCO is stable and reliable. This well describes EBSCO's position, as it did a few years ago when we issued a similar statement. We're here, doing what we planned to be doing at this point in our company's history. Next year we will celebrate 60 years of successfully serving customers. EBSCO is a financially strong, stable company with a Dun & Bradstreet financial strength rating of 5A1, the highest awarded. We're the only one of the major subscription vendors that hasn't been merged, acquired or changed managerially in recent years. We are privately held and family members are actively engaged in the day-to-day management of the business. The family takes a long-term view and, as a result, we make decisions with and for the benefit of our customers and employees. We listen to our customers to determine what we need to do to grow our company based on our long-term mission of maintaining profitability and providing the best service possible to our customers. The two are inextricably tied.

Customer service is our priority. Throughout EBSCO's history providing exceptional customer service has been one of our goals. We've combined good people with good systems and backed them with a strong commitment to serving our customers' needs. This steady and consistent commitment is the reason we operate 30 regional offices in 19 countries around the world – we want to provide personal, local service for our customers. It's why we concentrate on service from the first sales call to the day-to-day management of our customers' subscriptions.

Our plans are simple. We will continue to serve our customers' needs as they develop and change. We do this through partnerships – with librarians, publishers and other vendors. EBSCO's long-term goal has always been to offer our customers the resources they need to make their libraries true "one-stop" sources for all their patrons' research needs. As we develop additional services, we strive for a balance between technology and personal service. We are seriously engaged in integrating our Web-based services, not only with each other but with the other information sources required by our customers and their patrons.

Now, our reply to one of the library community's basic questions:

Can we be trusted with your library's money and its mission? Absolutely. EBSCO's management and staff take seriously their role as a partner in your library's mission. We realize your funds are limited, but your commitment to service is not, and we will act responsibly on your behalf. Strong evidence of our dedication to timely payment for customer orders is the large and diverse group of publishers who have agreed to grace journal issues during our negotiations for the RoweCom purchase. They know by experience that EBSCO pays its bills, and they have not hesitated to help resolve the current situation. We will continue to offer prepayment options that can help librarians stretch finite funds through credits for early pay. And we will continue to encourage our customers to increase their purchasing power through this means without requiring costly and unnecessary measures of reassurance which ultimately result in negating the program's financial benefit.

So this is our position – business as usual. We believe our management philosophy, our network of offices and personnel, our tradition of excellence and our financial strength assure us and our customers of continued success.

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Overview: Branding Task Force Activities 2000 to Present

2000

- Branding Task Force appointed by SLA president Susan DiMattia. Members are Carol Ginsburg (chair), Marian Bremer, Holly Bussey, Ava Goldman, Neil Infield, Dottie Moon (board liaison), Roberta Piccoli, Lynn Smith (SLA staff), and Barbara Spiegelman. The task force is to assess SLA's brand identity and retain a consulting firm.
- Task force recommends that SLA retain Source, Inc., as the consulting firm for the branding project. AOOC (Association Office Operations Committee) task force chair, and key staff meet with Source, Inc., to refine contract and project expectations and set fees.

2001

- Source, Inc., gathers and develops an "opportunity matrix" and questions for interviews with stakeholders.
- Branding initiatives posted to SLA website.
- Task force member Barbara Spiegelman authors "Would You Buy SLA?" for *Information Outlook*.
- Task force creates an information kit with details of the branding project, timelines, and communications plan.
- Public Relations Committee panel presentation, "Mirror, Mirror, On the Wall," with "image" as topic.
- President's Series presentation on branding. SLA president Donna Scheeder leads a panel that includes Carol Ginsburg, Dottie Moon, Laura Claggett of Unilever, and Bill O'Connor of Source, Inc.
- Task force participates in presentations on branding in the SLA Marketplace and distributes information packets.
- Source, Inc., convenes branding focus group.
- Source, Inc., conducts Web-based survey of 450 stakeholders: members, nonmembers, vendors, educators, CEOs, press, and the general public. Response rate is poor.
- Second Web survey conducted in October. Response rate is much better.
- Source, Inc., reports to board of directors on SLA brand identity profile. Task force and board convey their disappointment in the quality of the report.

2002

- Town hall meeting at the Leadership Development Institute includes a discussion on branding.
- Branding Task Force and board sever ties with Source, Inc.
- Task force and board retain consulting firm Creative Project Management (CPM).
- Task force, SLA staff, and CPM brainstorm members perceptions about branding and identity.
- CPM name and tagline ideas presented to task force. Membership solicited through surveymonkey.com polls.
- Names and taglines are tested for logo development on basis of polling results.
- Preliminary logos presented to membership at annual conference town hall meeting and through surveymonkey.com. Feedback indicates a need to focus on a name only.
- Board asks task force to help move process into membership vote. Task force membership changes: Stephen Abram (chair), Holly Bussey, Carol Ginsburg, Neil Infield, Cindy Romaine, Lynn Smith, and David Stern (board liaison).
- Task force revises list of possible names on basis of feedback from annual conference and Web survey.
- Membership polled on list of 22 possible names (2,143 responses).
- Two possible names presented to board of directors for consideration. Communications plan updated.
- Task force continues to meet to further educate and inform membership regarding name change and branding.

2003

- Membership will vote on name change at annual conference in June.

Overview prepared by Holly Bussey.

- The name "Special Libraries Association, Inc." is broken and cannot be "fixed" without excessive, expensive, and possibly fruitless efforts to build new meaning into the old brand. The name does not meet our basic standard of representing our members' best interests for our internal and external communications, image, and identity.

- Members respect and value their history but want the name to be more open and to reflect a wider range of future opportunities.

- Many of those polled favor significant change; in the opinion of the task force, the name "Information Professionals International" reflects this view.

- We need to remain sensitive to the needs and concerns of the minority.

- We believe that it is especially difficult to use the current name for recruiting; for communicating with decisionmakers who are unfamiliar with our profession; and in certain core markets such as corporations, for-profit organizations, independent consultants, and other emerging alternative roles.

- Members who represented the markets most essential to our association's future success (younger or newer librarians, corporate librarians, librarians and other information professionals practicing outside traditional libraries) were overwhelmingly in favor of a new name. This is not to say that other sectors are not very important, but we must acknowledge those areas from which the association's growth must come.

- The task force believes that our association can be very successful with either suggested name as a brand. Each name has advantages and disadvantages.

- The "Information Professionals International" option reflects the many members who favor significant change. The significant group of members who favor a more traditional choice may find "SLA" (the acronym) a more attractive option.

- The suggestion of changing "Special" in the current name to "Specialist" or "Specialized" was not thought to have enough "stretch" to address the issues enumerated above.

"Information"

Of the 67 libraries and information schools in the United States, 59 have the word "information" as part of their educational mission. Graduates into the profession are used to—and may be invested in—being called "information professionals."

"Special"

In the Gale Directory of Associations, 231 associations use the word special in their names:

61 Special Olympics groups
6 special committees or special funds for charities
2 special effects organizations
27 special education groups
39 special interest groups
5 special forces (military)
11 special care needs (health)
67 special needs and special advocates (almost all for mental disabilities)
6 special agents or deputies (FBI, CIA, etc.)
4 special events groups
3 library groups (SLA, Japan, and Canada)

A significant portion of these organizations use the word "special" to represent some form of disability, and the word has come to have that connotation in the popular

By Any Other Name

Job Titles Used by Information Professionals

Archives/Archivist - Associate Director for Information and Technology - Bibliographic Database Manager - Bibliographic Instruction Coordinator - Business Information Coordinator - Business Information Specialist - Cataloger - Category Architect - Collection Services Coordinator - Community Web Site Coordinator - Computer Services Manager - Consultant - Content Manager - Coordinator for Assessment and Continuous Improvement - Coordinator for Bibliographic Control - Coordinator, Information Services - Coordinator, Information Systems - Coordinator of Programs and Promotions - Coordinator of Reference and Information - Curator - Curator of Manuscripts - Cybrarian - Data Services Specialist - Database Editor - Database Manager - Dean of Libraries - Development and Community Relations Officer - Digital Acquisitions Coordinator - Digital Archivist - Director of Educational Information - Director of Electronic Learning - Director of Information Technology Development Services - Director, Information Technology Services - Director of Networking and Resource - Distance Learning Consultant - Document Manager - Electronic Content Manager - Electronic/Information Services Coordinator - Electronic Resources Access Specialist - Electronic Resources Cataloger - Electronic Resources Coordinator - Electronic Resources Officer - Electronic Resources Support Officer - Electronic Text and Imaging Center Coordinator - Fine Arts Bibliographer - Grants Manager and Subject Specialist - Head, Access and Media Services - Head, Automation - Head of Cataloging/Documents - Head of Cataloging and Electronic Access - Head of Collection Development - Head, Desktop Support Services - Head, Document Delivery Services - Head, Information Services - Head of Instructional Services - Head of Reference - Head of Reference/Adult Services - Head, Scholarly Publishing Office - Humanities Bibliographer - Imaging Coordinator - Information Advisor - Information Analyst - Information Architect - Information Associate - Information Consultant - Information Coordinator - Information Manager - Information Officer - Information Research Analyst - Information Resource Officer - Information Resources Specialist - Information Services Specialist - Information Specialist - Information Technology Specialist - Information and Training Specialist - Interface Specialist - Knowledge Analyst - Knowledge Architect - Knowledge Integrator - Knowledge Manager - Knowledge Network Specialist - Knowledge Resource Specialist - Learning Resources Team Leader - **Librarian** - Manager, External Content - Manager of Information Services - Manager, Electronic Text and Imaging Center - Manuscripts Cataloger - Media Center Coordinator - Media Coordinator - Media Services Head - Media Specialist - Media/Technology Specialist - Metadata Development Specialist - Microcomputer Training Specialist - Monograph Cataloger - Network Administrator - Network Services Coordinator - Network Systems Administrator - Photoarchivist - Print and Digital Monographic Cataloger - Product Analyst - Project Manager - Reader's Advisor - Reference Archivist - Research Analyst - Research Services Team Leader - Resource Services Manager - Resource Center Manager - Senior Information Analyst - Serials Cataloger - Serials/Database Cataloger - Sound Recordings Archivist - Strategic Information Manager - Systems Architect - System Coordinator - Team Leader, Information Arcade - Technical Information Specialist - Technological Information Manager - Technology Consultant - Technology Support Manager - Technology Team Leader - Training and Outreach Officer - University Archivist - Web Manager - Web/Systems Developer - World Wide Web Administrator

Source: Michelle Mach, Job Title Generator, updated July 10, 2002. http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/~mach/jobtitle.htm vernacular. Only 1 percent of the organizations with the word "special" in their names represent library-type interests.

Voting members at the Annual Business Meeting in June will undoubtedly consider the implications of their choice for the profession as well as for their individual circumstances.

Branding and Power

Mark Ford, an award-winning logo designer who worked with Nike, recently said, "Branding is about the simplicity of communication. It chisels away what is unnecessary to produce something that is instantly recognizable. The elements of the brand—the name, the core values, and the vision—all pull together to evoke the organization's message."[7]

Think about what we want the name of our association to do. We want it to point the way to the future, to be inclusive, to be ambitious, to be expansive, to build confidence and allow us to evolve, even as we use the strong foundation of our current practices.

Business consultant Tom Peters says, "One of the things that attracts us to certain brands is the power they project."[8] Which of these new names, supported by other branding elements, projects an image that will attract talented members who will drive innovative programming, professional excellence, and compelling education programs within the profession?

Abandoning Librarianship?

What is the greatest fear moving forward? It is that by becoming a society of information professionals we will abandon librarianship; that is, we will emphasize computer skills over librarian skills. But librarianship is part of our core values; it is how we differentiate ourselves from computer organizations. It is the cornerstone of this organization and its *raison d'être*. Librarianship is part of our value proposition, because information is not technology driven; it has a service component.

"Information Professionals International" emphasizes the individual versus the institution, which is implicit in our current name. Do teachers, nurses, or lawyers need their classroom, hospital, or firm to produce value? Not necessarily. It is the same for librarians and information professionals. We collect, access, organize, and add value to information regardless of where it is housed.

A case can be made that the term *information professional* is more inclusive than the term *librarian*—see the list of job titles in the sidebar.

The Nike Story

I've worked in the Design Library at Nike for the past 12 years. During that time, Nike has become one of the best-known consumer product brands in the world. In 1987, the company was in a situation similar to that of SLA today. Here's the story, from Scott Bedbury's article in *Fast Company* magazine.[9]

My brand is stuck in the past.

It happens to the best brands. In fact, it almost always happens to the best brands. They take off like a comet, only to plateau. They make gradual improvements, but they need transformation.

It happened to Nike. When I joined the company in 1987, it was attempting to transcend its narrow base of hard-core competitive male athletes and appeal to a broader consuming public. Up until that time, "brand Nike" was essentially pure competition: Its brand DNA was testosterone heavy, with a "wimps need not apply" ethos. "Authentic athletic performance" was being interpreted too narrowly. Nike needed to be a more inclusive, rather than exclusive, brand. At the same time, it couldn't jeopardize the young-male franchise that considered Nike to be "their" brand.

A few months before I came on board, Nike had aired a TV commercial called "Revolution" that was a huge departure for the company. It featured a complex juxtaposition of gritty black-and-white 8-mm images that ranged all over the cultural map. The message: Nike was a brand that spoke to women as well as to men, to the old as well as to the young, to obscure street athletes as well as to world champs.

The problem was, the subsequent campaign was a step in the wrong direction. "Hayward Field"—a loving visual testimonial to the track at the University of Oregon—was both inward and backward looking. We killed the ad minutes after previewing it to a thousand Nike sales reps, who then left the sales meeting with nothing to show the footwear buyers when writing back-to-school orders. We were in a very tough spot. We sent Wieden & Kennedy back to the well with a short brief that stated the obvious: We had to stop talking just to ourselves and open up the access point to the brand. The emotional and physical benefits of sports and fitness were much more expansive than we had defined them to date.

Two weeks later, Dan Wieden, David Kennedy, and four or five staffers (who made up half of the agency at the time) had the answer. Consumers already knew all that they needed to know about fitness. Most were not happy about the shape they were in. Few had the time to be serious athletes. So why rub their noses in it? They just needed a little encouragement, an optimistic challenge. "Just Do It" was a watershed moment for Nike. It established a broad communication platform from which we could talk to just about anyone. It wasn't only about world-class athletics; it was about fundamental human values shared by triathletes and mall walkers alike. It wasn't a product statement either. It was a brand ethos. Nike had found a way to respect its past while embracing its future. "Just Do It" was a much-needed re-expression of timeless Nike values.

Embracing the Future

The task force has attempted to offer options that will allow us to open up and be more inclusive, and to be relevant to current and potential members. The issues that information professionals deal with are increasingly high profile. We can deliver a better product faster than the founding members of our organization ever foresaw. Adapting to change is as valuable in our skill set as any of the skills we learned in school.

We need to plant one foot in the past of libraries and information that focuses on place, and just as firmly plant the other foot in the future—staking out new territory that technology has made available to the information professional. We should set our goals high.

Notes

1. Scott Bedbury and Stephen Fenichell. 2002. *A New Brand World: Eight Principles for Achieving Brand Leadership in the 21st Century*. New York: Viking Press, p. 28.
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3. Bedbury and Fenichell, p. 14.
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5. http://www.sla.org/content/SLA/strategic/slanplan/vision.cfm.
6. Andrew S. Grove. 1996. *Only the Paranoid Survive: How to Exploit the Crisis Point That Challenges Every Company*. New York: Currency Doubleday, p. 3.
7. Interview with Mark Ford (www.gofwd.com), December 10, 2002.
8. Peters, p. 90.
9. Scott Bedbury. 2002. "Nine Ways to Fix a Broken Brand," *Fast Company*, February, p. 76.

Chapter • Division • Caucus Websites

Special Libraries Association
www.sla.org

➤ For information on SLA Unit Conference Events, visit One Today!

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Military Librarians (DMIL)
http://www.sla.org/division/dmil/index.html
Museums, Arts & Humanities (DMAH)
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information trends

Dressing Up and Taking Our Show on the Road

By Stephen Abram

I'd like to talk a little about branding and image issues in the context of technology, and the impact technology has had and will continue to have on our profession. There is a wise Asian saying, "*One thing is said; a thousand are understood*." What we say is often overwhelmed by the image we project or the context. It's difficult to talk peace on a battlefield. It's hard to defend your ethics and reputation while you are on trial. It appears impossible to claim a love of privacy when you're an international celebrity. The assertions may be true, but it's a challenge to ensure that people actually *believe* them.

I have spent a great deal of time over the past two decades thinking about the issues of image, identity, and brand for myself, my profession, my job, my libraries and services, my companies, and my association. I've thought deep and hard about the various facets of this important issue and what they mean, starting 20 years ago when the "two Hollys" stood up at SLA chapter and division cabinet meetings with a presentation on a marketing and logo program for the association, through the interassociation task force on the image of the information professional, then through the SLA Strategic Planning Committee and PR Committee work, on the SLA Board, and now as chair of the Branding Task Force. I am, I admit, probably a little obsessed with this issue and a little over informed.

We do have a few challenges. We exist in a world where information is often easy and free to access. Much of this information is as nutritious as a Hostess Twinkie®; unfortunately, even a Twinkie® can satisfy the appetite in the short term. How do we make our services and professional skills more apparent, more tangible, and more

We exist in a world where information is often easy and free to access. Much of this information is as nutritious as a Hostess Twinkie®.

known in this challenging transition to a knowledge-based world? How do we make key segments of our user and decisionmaker populations *believe* and truly know that we are valuable experts in supporting them in putting knowledge to work?

It is clear that our old "brands" and "labels" are not working for us as well as they might. Sometimes they work, but often just in certain situations. However, they still have a great deal of value. *Librarian* and *library* are excellent words that are also, sadly, double-edged; they come freighted with both good and bad connotations in terms of our most important decisionmakers' understanding of our potential impact and value as practitioners and professionals. How do we broaden the perceptions of our profession, or at least have great conversations about our expanded roles as information professionals?

Dressing Our Image

In my life, I dress myself up in different ways to project the appropriate image. When it's reading story time, I'm in cords and a sweater. When I'm presenting to executives, I wear the power suit and tie. At library conferences, I wear ties that may have books, an information highway, or card catalogues in their design. For brainstorming or strategic planning sessions, where comfort helps to enhance creativity, I dress casually. Above all of this personal packaging is another context: my professional brand (librarian, special librarian, leader, manager, mentor, vice president); my corporate branding (Micromedia ProQuest); and my volunteer branding (alumnus, SLA, OLA, CLA, etc.). And then there is my personal branding: father, husband, uncle, son, friend. All of these can enhance or hinder whatever I'm trying to accomplish.

How are we dressed in the technology world? Are we, as a profession, perceived as technology gurus in some context? For instance, does our personal, professional, or association branding position us well in the context of a technology-enhanced world? Are we the top-of-mind search engine experts? Do we come to mind first as knowledge software, intranet architecture, and collaboration tools gurus? Is the phrase *special librarian* sufficient to make this connection? How do we communicate our strong library research competencies and our strong service positioning and still cast ourselves as leaders in the use, design, and implementation of information technologies to enhance the quality and quantity of research, service, and decisionmaking?

As we deal more and more with our clients and communities on a virtual basis, where are we as professionals? We were able to easily position our personal marketing on an individual level when our professional interactions were face-to-face (or at least voice-to-voice). It's no surprise that times have changed! It's a simple matter to look, review, and adapt.

Our Virtual Look

What do we look like in a virtual world? Go now and check out the automatic signature file(s) in your e-mail program. I have done a quick glance of about a thousand SLA discussion list postings. Many people need to improve their signature files (or even use them in the first place). Remember that this is a surrogate identity for you out there in the virtual world. Here are some errors I spotted:

- No signature at all (often, in these virus-filled times, business card attachments are stripped off by client firewalls).
- First name only (how casual do you want to be perceived to be?).
- No contact information (some clients might want to call back and are put off by having to take extra steps to look you up).
- No snail mail address and no fax (not all replies can be handled by e-mail).
- Silly mottoes or ASCII cartoons from a random generator (do you want to take the chance that an inappropriate motto goes to a client?).
- No context—no MLS, no job title, no department (you're taking the chance that clients will assume your status and skills—from secretary to VP—it's a risk!).

Your signature is something you can quickly review to make sure it projects the desired image.

Check out your website and virtual presence. Here are some tips:

- Google yourself. See what your identity is on the Web. Popular with blind dates: decide whether you'd hire yourself on the basis of what you find about yourself on the Web.
- Check out your e-mail address. Do you keep separate personal and professional addresses? Does it look professional to send resumes or business correspondence from abramfamily@free.email.com? Not really. Honestly assess your domain name. Is it unique? Is it AOL? Is it corporate? Is it cute? Does it project what you want to say about you as a pro?
- On your library website or intranet, do you have a personal page with your bio? How are people you work with going to know about you—your education, experience, publications, awards, and talents—if you don't tell them or make it easy for them to find out? Is a dynamic picture there? Is your contact info there?
- Where on your intranet is your service? Do you have an ASK button? "Ask a librarian—ASK—Ask a Question—Need more info?" —whatever. Weave your services into the DNA of your intranet. It can't hurt your job security either.
- Does your service have a logo? Is it visible on more than a paper brochure—routing slips, memo notes, etc.? Do you have many different electronic copies of it? Can you use it in your e-mail? Can you use it everywhere your electronic presence is needed? Does it project (or have meaning built into it through good marketing and a long history of great service) the identity you want to project to your key users and decisionmakers?
- For those of you into virtual reference or e-mail reference, what is your identity there? It's not enough to have a snappy name without a personal identity, too.

We were able to easily position our personal marketing on an individual level when our professional interactions were face-to-face (or at least voice-to-voice).

So what are steps you can take to review of your external virtual identity?

- Be a secret shopper. Send yourself an e-mail at work and at home. Does it look the way you want to look in both places?
- Visit your intranet and pretend you're new. What does it feel like? Where is the personal help?
- Google yourself. Do a search on some of the major databases for your name.
- Have someone who doesn't know your service try. If you just let them seek, I guarantee you'll get insights.

Remember, "One thing is said, a thousand are understood."

Stephen Abram is vice president of Micromedia ProQuest in Canada. He can be reached at sabram@micromedia.ca.

Products mentioned are not endorsed by Stephen Abram, Micromedia ProQuest, or SLA, and are used here for illustrative purposes to highlight the types of technology opportunities that are coming to market.

Branding: An Interview with a PR Pro

SLA's Brand

WITH THE CONCEPT OF *BRANDING* BEING DISCUSSED IN SLA, THE PUBLIC Relations Committee thought it would be helpful to get the perceptions of Carole Goldstein, a senior information specialist at Ketchum New York, one of the top PR firms in the country. We asked questions by e-mail.

PR Committee: What is a brand?

Carole Goldstein (CG): A brand gives a product, service, or organization an identity that has meaning to its audience. The audience can be an individual or a group, such as employees, consumers, investors, or the media. Hopefully, the brand conveys an emotional message to the audience that has a positive and memorable impact.

PR Committee: What is SLA's brand?

CG: I think SLA means very different things to different people, reflecting the diversity of its members. Among information professionals who work in corporate libraries, most everyone knows that SLA exists. But I get the impression that the older librarians feel the organization is more relevant and important and useful, and the younger librarians feel that maybe it is old-fashioned, kind of stodgy, with no real relevance to them. This is just my general impression from talking to, admittedly, not that many corporate librarians, but maybe enough for a good-sized focus group. I'm not sure how people in other kinds of libraries perceive it—medical librarians are the type I have most regular contact with through my job, and when I've happened to mention SLA (for example, the conference being held in New York this year), they seem barely aware of it compared with the Medical Library Association. As far as the "real world" goes, like the public and the news media, I don't think people have even heard of it, let alone understand what it is.

Brand

In the company I work for, the research function has great prominence in the organization, but no one thinks of it as a library in the traditional sense. Most of the people in my department have backgrounds in market research. When I say I have a librarian background, the employees seem surprised. Similarly, when I tell people I meet for the first time what I do, they seem a little puzzled. It doesn't seem to be common knowledge that corporate libraries exist. It may be a leap, but I imagine that the general public doesn't know much about SLA either.

PR Committee: What elements of the perception of its brand can SLA control and manage?

CG: Especially in this information-overloaded world, with so many competing products and people and concepts vying for our attention, a particular brand needs to somehow stand out or it will just get lost. A brand identity that works conveys a meaningful message or "brand promise" to its audience. For SLA, a meaningful brand promise might communicate the validity of the profession and be conveyed in a slogan like "The Special Libraries Association: How to Thrive in the Information Age." (People might not respond so well to "SLA: Not the Symbionese Liberation Army"!) The goal is, first, to create or raise audience awareness that the brand exists, then encourage comprehension of what the brand is, and ultimately effect some sort of behavioral change, such as increased sales or participation.

One uniting brand identity and image would raise awareness of SLA and combat any stigma attached to the profession. The organization can set goals that are in some way measurable, so that it can be demonstrated, for example, that the level of awareness has moved from point A to point B. This usually involves conducting research to uncover target audiences' demographics and "psychographics" (values, attitudes, and habits) and surveying or conducting focus groups with the targeted audiences to determine the current level of awareness and how they perceive the brand. After various public relations and marketing strategies and tactics are carried out, the audience reaction is measured again to see if "the needle moved" and the desired awareness, comprehension, and behavioral goals were achieved. While SLA can't

Interview

control the outcome, setting realistic goals and embracing consistent communication of the brand identity at all points of contact with the audience—letters, speeches, interviews, faxes, website, etc.—is the best way for SLA to manage its brand image.

PR Committee: In your opinion, is branding important to a not-for-profit professional association?

CG: Branding is advantageous to nonprofits for at least two reasons. First, it raises awareness so that people will know where to turn during times of need. This is particularly important in an era when people think they can get information from anywhere—they don't necessarily turn to their associations. Second, branding increases the likelihood of donations from both corporations and individuals. Branding puts a face on the organization, making it personal. Sometimes this can erase a stigma or give a diverse group a consistent image. A good example is the AARP. They turned their stodgy image around by portraying their members as vibrant, active, and hopeful—advertising heavily, revamping, and introducing more customized benefits. For example, the name of their new *My Generation* magazine connotes the flower children of the 1960s to the boomers. As a boomer rapidly approaching AARP eligibility, I can understand how this image helps to cushion the blow! They also showed the diversity of the group, helping to court more members. SLA certainly doesn't have the resources, clout, and huge membership base of the AARP, but even on a smaller budget, SLA can use PR tactics and advertising and marketing strategies to decrease negative perceptions and unify diverse people with one commonality.

SLA can use PR tactics and advertising and marketing strategies to decrease negative perceptions and unify diverse people with one commonality.

PR Committee: If there is a name change, what would be the steps to follow in a campaign to present a name change to our internal clients (SLA membership, presumably before the deed is done) and to the general public (after the deed is done)?

CG: I don't know that a name change is the answer, but first SLA should find out how its membership feels about it by surveying its audience and/or conducting focus groups. Probably an outside company or the Public Relations Committee members would have the best expertise to conduct the research. I've been in an SLA meeting where the group was informally polled about their opinion of a name change. While not in any way scientific or representative, it did raise awareness of the issue and perhaps gave SLA leadership some idea of their internal clients' state of mind. If the consensus turns out to be that a name change would be beneficial, a comprehensive internal communication plan should be implemented. Staffers and volunteers should conduct meetings and briefings, distribute campaign kits, and make presentations to members to get them on board.

Addressing external audiences, such as the general public and the news media, is the next step. Measurable goals should be set at the beginning for all public relations, marketing, an advertising programs, and these might be based on media impressions (number and tone of articles mentioning the name change), connections (phone calls and website hits), or awareness tracking. Long-term goals should include benchmarking against perceived functional and emotional benefits to members.

Training should be conducted to ensure that all those involved—top association executives, program heads, employees, and volunteers—consistently communicate the right image to the outside world. Logos, fonts, colors, and slogans on all materials should communicate the brand promise. Some ideas for PR programs might include publicizing brilliant corporate executives' high opinions of their companies' librarians or creating theories around what companies could achieve if their information professionals had the requisite resources and status.

The SLA Public Relations Committee thanks Carole for her comments. The questions were compiled by Ellen Cartledge, chair, with contributions from committee members Heather Hlava, Julie Ketterman, and Juanita Richardson. Comments may be sent to Ellen Cartledge at ecartledge@earthlink.net.

Understand Your Brand Values—But Trust the Professionals, Too

By Tim Owen

Tim Owen is head of external relations at the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

Take the Time to Get It Right!

TIM OWEN EXPLAINS THE BACKGROUND OF THE CREATION OF A NEW CORPORATE identity for the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), which was formed when the UK Library Association and Institute of Information Scientists united.

Don't try to understand 'em!
Just rope and throw and brand 'em!

So went the theme to "Rawhide," a 1960s TV series (for those old enough to remember) about cattle driving. That may have been good advice for branding cattle, but when you're creating a corporate identity for a new professional body with a rich and complex portfolio of products and services—and strong professional and ethical values to boot—such advice would be disastrous. I found that understanding the organization was vital, as was interpreting that understanding to the professional designer who was an essential part of the process.

I was pretty well placed to provide that interpretation. I arrived on the staff of the Library Association (LA) about seven months before the planned unification. For most of my information career I had been an active member of the Institute of Information Scientists (IIS), the other partner in the unification venture. So while undergoing a crash course on how the LA operated and what it offered to its members, I was able to compare its activities and values with those of the IIS, and thus begin to imagine the values that the unified Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals would wish to embrace.

For example, I took a phone call one morning from our principal designer, who was wrestling with concepts for CILIP's main promotional brochure. He asked if I could suggest some words that encapsulated the new organization's aspirations. I came up with "commitment," "community," "global," "influence," "strength," "agenda," "expertise," "vision," "practice," "delivery," "support," and "awareness." Not only did these words provide the stimulus our designer needed, but he actually incorporated them into the brochure design itself.

I did not attempt to dictate to the designer on matters of design, color, or layout. I had my trade and stuck to it, and he had his. In branding, it is important to develop a close relationship with your designers, brief them thoroughly, and then trust their judgment.

The brief to our designer for our basic logo was clear: a clean, classic look, reflecting the new institute's professional authority and credibility. Established, complementary fonts for the logo and strapline: Baskerville and Gill Sans. No pictorial images that would date easily; because once you have a logo, you have it for a long time, and you don't want it to start looking tired. We could not use IIS or LA corporate colors, so no lilac and purple, no red. Above all, the logo had to have impact, to stand out in a crowd—in a row of partner logos on a conference brochure, for example, or a line of links on a website.

So what happened when the joint committee of IIS and LA members to whom I presented our shortlisted design ideas didn't like our choices? We managed to avoid the trap of having the logo redesigned by committee. Instead, we took the committee members' views back to our designer, who gave them some thought and came up with a redesign that addressed their concerns. Thus, we had a committee of clients with firm views and a professional designer to devise something that worked in design terms. It was a good combination, and the revised design sailed through.

With the logo design finalized, we needed to protect it against misuse, even accidental, well-meaning misuse. No unauthorized tinkering with the proportions or the colors could be tolerated. When a familiar design looks wrong, you may not know why it looks wrong, but it's unsettling nevertheless, and you don't trust it. We couldn't have our members, partners, clients, or sponsors unsettled. The logo would also have to work satisfactorily in every medium: stationery, glossy flyers, display material, signs, internal memos, PowerPoint presentations, websites.

So we set our designer to work on rules: when you had to use the portrait version of the logo and when you were allowed to substitute the landscape version; what to do when you could print in only two colors and neither of them was the CILIP pink; how much space you had to leave around the logo to ensure that it wasn't jostled by rival images. Anyone who was entitled to use the CILIP logo (our groups and branches, organizations in liaison, partners, sponsors) received a design guidelines package, including an illustrated booklet, high-quality artwork for scanning, and a set of electronic versions of the logo on CD-ROM, in formats suitable for PC and Mac, suitable for high-quality printing work and optimized for the Web.

Not until we reached this stage could we start designing our portfolio of promotional and other literature: brochures, guides, handbooks, reports, a new website, and new exhibition stand panels. Up to now we had relied on just one designer, but with the style guidelines in place we could open the field to others, provided they conformed to the basic rules. We needed more designers because vesting day for CILIP was fast approaching, and we wanted to have a complete set of basic rebranded material in place.

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So another important lesson in rebranding is project management: establish a timetable, meet deadlines, and be ready with a backup plan. You don't want your launch day to arrive when only half your promotional material is ready.

Nearly a year after that first launch, has the rebranding worked? On the whole, yes. Recognition among decisionmakers in the library and information profession is high, and there is almost universal praise for the design values of our published output. It's not often you have the opportunity to redesign all your output at one go, and it would have been a criminal waste not to have seized that opportunity.

Does it cost? Yes, but you have to look on it as a long-term investment. I wouldn't expect to have to go through any sort of serious redesign exercise for another 10 years at least, so we now have a decade with the big design and reprinting costs behind us and face only the marginal costs of revision, reprinting, and design amendments for new output. We are also moving more and more toward electronic publishing and print-on-demand, so we should save on printing costs while reaping the benefit of our early decision that the design had to be suitable for both print and electronic media. This is a more significant decision than you might imagine: the palette of colors available for printing on paper is vast, but the Web palette is severely limited, so your designer must square the circle by coming up with a striking and distinctive color scheme that works acceptably in both media.

Has anything not worked? Well, people much prefer the acronym—CILIP—to the full name, which most regard as a bit of a mouthful. But this could represent an opportunity, in time. At the moment, the name and the acronym are typographically inseparable. But if we did eventually choose to abandon the full name for branding purposes, we certainly wouldn't be the first organization to adopt a snappier name by introducing a new word into the language. Who now remembers what UNESCO once stood for?

If there's one overriding lesson to be taken away from this rebranding exercise, it's that it takes time to get it right. The devil is in the details, and details can make or break a successful brand. We made some mistakes, sure. But by and large we did get it right, because we spent what seemed like an inordinate amount of time on the details. That time was well invested; had we skimped on it, we probably would have ended up with a weaker overall identity. So where time is concerned, think of a number and double it. You won't regret the investment.

copyright **corner**

Copyright Term Extension Upheld

By Laura Gasaway

On January 15, 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court ended speculation and debate about the constitutionality of the 1998 20-year expansion of the term of copyright to existing works. In *Eldred v. Ashcroft*,[1] the Court upheld congressional authority to determine the "limited times" for which copyright may be available as provided in the U.S. Constitution. Just because the span of years for protection is expanded and applied retroactively does not mean it ceases to meet the limited times restriction in the Constitution.[2]

The Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act (CTEA), signed into law on October 27, 1998, extended the term of copyright from life of the author plus 50 years to life plus 70. *Eldred* did not challenge the basic extension of the term but rather the retroactivity provision, which applies to all works still under copyright. The *Eldred* appeal addressed only two issues: the retroactivity of term extension and whether a law that extends the term of copyright is immune from First Amendment challenges. Based solely on year of publication, only works published before 1923 in the United States are clearly in the public domain. In fact, it will be the end of 2018 before any other published work enters the public domain, and that is only if there are no further extensions of the term for existing works.

Although Eldred's name is the one associated with the case, other plaintiffs include a nonprofit Internet distributor of rare books, a sheet music distributor, a choir director, and a film preservation company. Eric Eldred, the owner of Eldritch Press, takes public domain works, digitizes them, adds hypertext references, and then makes them available free on the Web.[3] Plaintiffs sued for a declaratory judgment that the CTEA was unconstitutional. The federal district court ruled against Eldred and upheld the constitutionality of term extension.[4] He appealed to the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia and lost again.[5] The Special Libraries Association has been involved with this case from the first and, along with 15 other library associations, developed an amicus brief on the side of Eldred[6] for the Supreme Court appeal.

In an opinion authored by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the Court found that Congress had acted properly when it voted to extend the term of copyright, even retroactively, as it has done on several previous occasions. Further, extensions to existing copyrights are still for limited times; it does not mean that such terms cease to be limited times if they are later expanded.

On the second issue, the Supreme Court held that the D.C. Circuit spoke too broadly when it declared that copyrights were "categorically immune from challenge under the First Amendment." Although the opinion is not generally favorable to the library position, this part of the holding is actually very good news. Eldred claimed that the CTEA was a content-neutral regulation of speech that fails "heightened scrutiny," the so-called mid-level test for determining the constitutionality of a statute. The Court refused to apply "strict scrutiny" (the highest-level test) or even heightened scrutiny to the First Amendment claim. Instead, it applied the lowest-level test, "rational basis," and found that this act of Congress, even applied retroactively, satisfied that test.

There were two strong dissents in this case. Justice John Paul Stevens argued that Congress had exceeded its authority in enacting the CTEA because of policies that favor the public domain and the limited times provision of the Copyright Clause of the Constitution. Stevens pointed out that economic reward to the copyright holder is a secondary consideration; benefits to the public are primary. Publishers argued that extending the term of copyright contributed to the preservation of older works, which Stevens found to be a particularly specious argument. Are not libraries and archival collections, Stevens asked, more likely to preserve works in the public domain than they are to go through the permissions process to preserve works still under copyright? Older films are often turned over to the Library of Congress for preservation; the copyright owner apparently has little interest in doing so, even though the copyright term has not expired.

Justice Stephen G. Breyer disagreed with the majority; he said that the CTEA should be reviewed using heightened scrutiny, but he also found that the statute failed even the rational basis test for three reasons. First, the significant benefits bestowed by term extension are private and not public benefits. Second, the CTEA seriously threatens to undermine the expressive values that the Copyright Clause embodies. Third, there is no justification for term extension in any significant Copyright Clause-related objective.

Breyer also stated that the claim about enacting the CTEA to ensure international uniformity was very weak, as was the concern about incentives to create copyrighted works. As he reasoned, a deceased author is not motivated by a longer copyright term to create additional works, and the purpose of copyright is to encourage creation of copyrighted works, not to promote their dissemination. Justice Breyer also recognized the difficulties that libraries and other users of works will encounter during the additional 20-year term. He cited economic studies that indicate that only 2 percent of works are still economically viable between the 55th and 75th years of the copyright term. An even smaller percentage likely will be viable from the 75th to the 95th year. Therefore, for less than 2 percent of the works under copyright, all users will face the prospect of seeking permission and paying royalties. The permissions management will be difficult and expensive. Royalties may also be quite high.

One thing that was clear from the majority opinion is that the Supreme Court was not determining the correctness of the underlying policy for this term extension. Instead, it focused on congressional power to do so. Congress is the body to consider the policy issues for legislation, not the Court.

The table below shows the term of copyright from the first U.S. copyright statute to the present.

Year	Term	Renewal
1790	14 years	14 years
1831	28 years	14 years
1909	28 years	28 years
1978	Life + 50 years	X
1998	Life + 70 years	X

The majority opinion pointed out that the term of copyright had been extended several times before and applied retroactively to works still under copyright. What was missing from the analysis was the fact that each of the other expansions of the term of copyright had come about as a part of a total revision of the Copyright Act, so Congress addressed the underlying policy considerations. The CTEA, in contrast, was only an extension of the term and not a total revision of the act.

What is the likely impact of this case? It is a bit too soon to know, but clearly, congressional power to extend the term of copyright retroactively was upheld. Does this mean that in about 2015 or 2016, media companies will again lobby Congress to extend the term of copyright for their works? Perhaps, but the library community, and maybe the general public (more than in 1998), will be ready to argue forcefully against such an action as poor public policy.

1. *537 U.S. _____, 123 S. Ct. 769 (2003).*
2. *"Copyright Corner" in Information Outlook, April 2002.*
3. *Eldritch Press website, see http://209.11.144.65/eldritchpress/. "Here are free, accessible books. Read them and go in peace." is the first statement readers see.*
4. *74 F.Supp.2d 1 (D.D.C. 1999).*
5. *255 F.3d 849 (D.C. Cir. 2001).*
6. *http://eon.law.harvard.edu/openlaw/eldredvashcroft/supct/amici/libraries.pdf.*

The *Why?* Behind Web Research Portals

By Stuart M. Basefsky

Stuart Basefsky is an information specialist and instructor at the Martin P. Catherwood Library, School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR), Cornell University and director of the IWS News Bureau of the Institute for Workplace Studies(IWS) in the New York City Office of the ILR School.

An All-Purpose Web Research Portal

LIBRARIES, AS WELL AS COMPANIES, CREATE TOOLS THAT PROVIDE INFORMATION access with extraordinary capabilities, but too often they neglect to ask the essential question *why?* Had this question been asked more often, Web research portals might have been developed years earlier. The purpose of this article is to provide the essential policy concerns behind Web research portal development and a raison d'être for research portals. The concepts are tied to a specific example of what has been produced in the Catherwood Library at the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University in order to illustrate how theory has been applied, with the hope that this knowledge can be transferred to other situations and organizations.

When one decides to construct a research system, regardless of its size, some basic questions need to be addressed. The first, of course, is *why is one doing this in the first place*?

The answer should be that the clients who will be served by the system will find what they need, when they need it, where they need it, and in a format that can be used with ease. While this seems to be a simple proposition, the devil is in the interpretation and details of the response. Too often the zeal with which librarians approach the issue distorts the outcome. The effort to find technical solutions to client needs usually falls into one of two categories: (1) the all-in-one package of information designed to meet as many needs as possible (often a library information system), or (2) a focused, meet-most-of-your-needs-most-of-the-time package of information (often a Web research portal).

The all-in-one package tends to be the ultimate goal for librarians, who generally desire to make as much authentic information available as possible with an eye toward enhancing the discovery of the best and most reliable sources. On the other hand, the meet-most-of-your-needs package is the desire of our clients, who want excellent (if not the best), reliable, and easily accessible information with little effort and who are usually not interested in searching for all the possibilities. This dichotomy is the result of a natural conflict that is present in the world of information. Should one create centralized systems that attempt to serve everyone at the cost of not serving any one person, group, division, department, school, or institute well? Or should one decentralize and focus a system on the shared needs of an identified clientele who are rarely interested in all the possibilities? Whom do we serve—ourselves or our clients? This question should be a simple one to answer. Unfortunately, it is not. Sometimes, in serving ourselves, we are better able to serve others.

In our recent history, the notion of building information systems that could be a single point of entry for all information needs captured the imaginations of knowledge professionals when they saw the extraordinary opportunities inherent in Web-based access. There was a scramble to create massive yet flexible systems that anyone could use for any purpose rather than systems targeted to any one group. This approach was, and still is, prevalent at large academic and research libraries, and on a smaller but no less significant scale, at companies as well. Information specialists undertook these efforts without a clear understanding of the real needs of their clientele.

This brings up the second question: *What are needs?*

Needs are not just what people want and what they can use for a given purpose. Needs are framed in terms of what they can afford in terms of *time*, *effort*, and *price* relative to the *quality* and *utility* that comes from using a product—in this case, information access.

Needs are not met when a user feels overwhelmed by a system that allows for every possibility. *Time* is involved in learning how to use the system. An *effort* must be made in terms of concentration and letting go of other, often more productive (so it is thought), ways to use one's time. The *cost* (whether time and effort or a monetary expenditure) of finding the "best" article, data element, or book is not warranted when an adequate or simply good item can be found quickly. The phrase "it will do" pops into one's head. In other words, the *utility* is met, however inadequately. Most people (including many academics) settle for less as long as it is adequate, cost-effective, and fulfills a purpose. Thus, it is clear why Google is very successful as an information tool and why library systems are less satisfying to clients.

Whether information professionals like it or not, the desires of our clients seem to define our goal as "meeting most needs, most of the time." You may not always agree with this approach, but if keeping your job is important, this has to be at least part of your goal. It should be coupled with the adage "keep it simple."

The quandary for the information profession becomes, therefore, "How can I provide the best information and highest utility for the least expenditure of time, effort, and money?" Out of this quandary is born the concept of a Web research portal: a methodical, Web-based guide to the best or most often used information in a field, requiring the least amount of effort to manipulate, with a caveat that more and better information might be found with assistance.

The All-Purpose Searching category is designed to meet the needs of both the information hunter and the astute researcher who knows how to use a broad-based service center.

Once it becomes clear that the "single point of entry" is designed more for librarians than for clients, it is easy to make the compromises that provide "excellent service," which I arbitrarily define as designing a system that meets 75 percent of one's needs with modest effort, the other 25 percent being met by reference services. These compromises are, in the context of this article, Web research portals. (Note the emphasis on providing "excellent service" rather than "an excellent system"—the two are not necessarily the same thing.)

There are many ways to approach the Web research portal concept. I will describe the steps I took in designing a portal with the hope that others may benefit from my efforts.

At the Catherwood Library in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University, I team teach, with a professor, a course called ILRHR 664—Human Resources Online Research and Reporting Methods. (See http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/cahrs/664.html and http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/cahrs/HRAbout.htm.)

This three-credit course starts with five weeks of intensive instruction on the use of the key resources that underpin the discipline of human resources management. Students must then answer three questions posed by human resource executives from Fortune 500 companies. Students work in pairs, with a 10-day limit to answer each question. They must learn how to interview executives so that they can give the executives what they need, which is not necessarily what they ask for. The students write an executive summary limited to two pages, with references and abstracts for further reading if the decisionmaker wants to pursue the topic further. In essence, students are taught how to become their own information consultants.

To lessen the labor involved in teaching this class to at least 20 students, it was necessary to make access to the information tools easily available on the Web without going through a complicated university library information system. The result was a Web research portal called Major Resources for Research (http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/reference/majorResources/).

As the homepage states, "This a research portal for finding material in disciplines related to Industrial & Labor Relations (ILR)." It turns out that most, if not all, of the key resources applicable to human resource management are also useful in related fields. Thus, this Web research portal has become the research tool of choice at the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations.

The portal's development followed a strict conceptual structure that includes these elements:

- Organization: designed to meet the intellectual needs of a particular field of study
- Methodology (training): intellectual approach to finding material that coordinates directly with the organization of information
- Shortcuts: a reward for learning the most valuable sources for a particular need
- Templates: a development access issue and a necessity for keeping material current and useful

Organization

One would like to assume that researchers have a general understanding of what they are seeking when they commence the research process. However, one should not make too many assumptions. Consequently, choices are immediately presented to the researcher in several categories, each of which is a mini-research portal unto itself. These categories are

1. All-Purpose Searching
2. Article Databases
3. Books and Journals
4. Citing Your Sources
5. Company Information
6. International Information
   a. General Links

b. Best Regional Sites
c. U.S. State Department
7. Public Policy Sources
a. General Links
b. Alphabet Soup Group for U.S. Policy
c. New York Legislative Information
8. Resources for Practitioners
a. Compact Disk (CD) Services
b. Networked Commercial Services
c. Password Protected Services
9. Statistical Resources and Data

The categories are designed according to the dictates of the publishing industry and the possible variations of researchers' desires. This organization is also designed to extract the most often requested, most often used, most recommended, and most reliable resources for research in the various disciplines associated with the field of industrial and labor relations.

The All-Purpose Searching category is designed to meet the needs of both the information hunter (who is not necessarily interested in neat packages of articles, data, books, and the like) and the astute researcher, who knows how to use a broad-based service system. It is also designed to fit a publishing category of "conglomerate service" such as Factiva, Lexis-Nexis, and Thomson Research. Of course, that is what one finds in this category.

The other categories are relatively self-explanatory and purpose-oriented. They reflect the types of materials that are found most often in the publishing industry as separate entities (articles, books, data, etc.)

Methodology (Training)

My suggestion to researchers, students, and faculty is to organize their questions categorically and ask the following questions: Am I looking for material that would normally appear in one of the categories listed? If so, which one(s)? For example, to find wage comparisons in occupations, I will need data. Therefore, I should consider going to the category of Statistical Resources and Data. Within this category, I would find Statistical Universe among other recommended tools. Other categories may prove helpful, but this is the logical place to start.

The feedback we receive indicates that this approach works most of the time, and it is a simple methodology to convey to clients. Clients can visualize the utility and structure of the website, and they know that these sources are listed because they are relevant to their general needs.

Because each category in the research portal is a mini-research portal, users are self-selecting a limited universe of information gathered for the express purpose of meeting most of their needs, most of the time. In an ideal world, I would not want more than 10 information products in any one category. Alas, the world is overwhelmed with information, so some categories are more complicated than I would wish.

Shortcuts

To overcome some of this complexity, a reward for effort is built into the system. Once the researcher recognizes a resource as consistently valuable, he or she can use a pull-down menu called Quick Links to set up a direct link to that source. The portal automatically creates a Quick Link whenever a new resource is placed into a template.

Templates

Templates provide the design structure of the portal, and my colleagues and I can update any given category from anywhere in the world, as long as we have Internet access. This is a necessary feature, as the world of information is anything but static. Flexibility is key to meeting the unpredictable needs of clients and the changing nature of the workplace. Our template system allows us to create a Web research portal on any topic at a moment's notice, or to check and correct a link.

While many novices to our field will find the portal's structure complex, it is only as complicated as the disciplines themselves. In fact, this research tool focuses on a very limited number of resources compared with what is offered by the library information system (LIS).

I should note that the LIS provides many of the key materials and links used in our Web research portal. For example, in the Article Databases category, rather than linking directly to Business Source Premier, the link is to the LIS description and link activation page for this source. This is done purposely to avoid having to deal with subscription and technical changes. In this sense, our portal relies on the continuing efforts of the central library technical staff to maintain their links. The LIS is treated, in effect, as just another database to which one should link. The idea is to maintain as much simplicity for the producer of the portal as for the researcher.

The faculty, students, and staff of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations rely heavily on this tool, because it was designed with their needs in mind. It is their research portal of choice and validates the raison d'être for Web research portals: they compensate for the complexities of the single-point-of-entry systems that are librarian-oriented rather than client-oriented.

However, just because this portal is currently successful does not mean that it will continue to be so. Raising the proper questions of *Why?* and *What needs?* is a daily task. The target shifts, and so must the Web research portal. Fortunately, it is built for change.

The Storyteller: An Interview with David McCullough

By Leslie Shaver

IN TALKING ABOUT DAVID MCCULLOUGH'S WORK, IT'S HARD TO KNOW WHERE to begin. There are the two Pulitzers (for works about Harry Truman and John Adams), two National Book Awards (for books about the Panama Canal and Theodore Roosevelt), and accolades from all over, including academia. If this is not enough to show the depth and importance of his work, there may be one other good indication: He has no books out of print.

In addition to writing, McCullough has been an editor, essayist, teacher, lecturer, former president of the American Society of Historians, and a regular on television, appearing on "Smithsonian World" and "The American Experience," and narrating numerous documentaries. He has also become a well-respected speaker, all over the world and even in the White House presidential lecture series. SLA members will get a chance to hear McCullough speak at the annual conference in June.

Leslie Shaver: How did your love of history begin?
David McCullough: I've always loved to read. Before I could read, my mother and grandmother would read to me. Some history was read to me as a child. It was not very difficult, but much of it was very appealing. I continued to read through school. In college, I became pretty sure that I wanted to become a writer, if not a painter. I majored in English. Though I always liked history, I decided I really wanted to make English literature my specialty.

After I graduated from college, I wound up with a job at Time-Life. When President Kennedy was elected, I went to Washington. While I was in Washington, my wife and I happened to go by a table one Saturday afternoon at the Library of Congress. On the table were pictures that had been taken by a Pittsburgh photographer in the 19th century. They were out on display before they were going to be cataloged. They had been given to the Library of Congress by the descendents of the photographer. The pictures were all of the Johnstown flood and its aftermath. Having grown up in western Pennsylvania, I had heard about the disaster, but I didn't know very much about it. I took a book out of the library to read about it, and I thought that book was quite unsatisfactory. I took another one out and, if anything, it was even less well done. I began to think that maybe this was a subject for me to try to write about. I had the privilege of being at Yale at a time when many writers were there as guests or fellows of one of the colleges. One of them was Thornton Wilder, who had made a big impression on me. I remember in one of his interviews he was asked how he got the ideas for the books and plays he wrote. He said, "I imagine a story I would like to read or see performed on stage. If nobody has written it, I write it so I can read it or see it performed on stage."

Well, I decided to take that as my guide and try to write the book I would like to read about the Johnstown flood. That's how it began. I quickly found that not only was I absorbed in the subject, but I also loved the work. After Kennedy was killed, I went back to work at American Heritage, and there, of course, I was dealing with history all the time for six years. It was a marvelous experience, and I worked with some of the best people in the field. It was during that time that I wrote the book, using the 42nd Street Library during my lunch hour, at nights, and over weekends. Writing that book, I learned how to use a library for the first time. I am enormously indebted to the Library of Congress and the 42nd Street Library—I've used both ever since for every book I worked on.

LS: Did this help you decide that writing was your life's work?
DM: Oh, yes, I'd found what I wanted to do. I couldn't imagine doing anything that I would enjoy more or find more absorbing. I also greatly liked the people I got to know—the people who were also writing history, or who were scholars, or who were librarians. I couldn't do what I do without librarians. Whenever I get the chance, I like to stress how important librarians are and that one should not judge a library only by the collections, but also by the people who are employed there and serve in the library. I can't tell you how many times I've had problems worked out or discoveries made possible by librarians who've taken an interest in what I'm doing. When I'm talking to students, I always say, "Don't try to hide what you don't know from a librarian. Make it very clear what

you are trying to do and, if you don't know how to go about doing it, say that. They are there to help you."

When I first started working on the Johnstown book, I thought you don't tell anybody about what you're doing because they'll come along and steal your wonderful idea. Well, I very quickly learned that the best thing you can do is tell as many people as possible what you're working on, because you never know when someone is going to know something about some piece of information that could be of great help.

LS: You followed the Johnstown book up with *The Great Bridge*. Where did that idea come from?

DM: The Johnstown book is primarily a lesson in the human failure of shortsightedness and irresponsibility. The theme is that it is dangerous and perhaps perilous to assume that the people in positions of responsibility are behaving responsibly. The Johnstown flood was not an act of God or nature. It was brought by human failure—human shortsightedness and selfishness. When I was finished with that book, I had two different publishers come to me, one of whom wanted me to write my next book about the Chicago fire. The other one wanted me to write about the San Francisco earthquake. I was being typecast as "Bad News McCullough" at a very young age, and I didn't like that. In fact, what I really wanted to write was a book about a subject that would show that people were not always foolish and inept or irresponsible. While that's part of the human story, there is another part which signifies again and again that we human beings can solve very difficult problems, often far beyond what we think we can do. What I was after was a symbol of affirmation as a counter voice to the Johnstown story.

It came by accident. One never knows where these ideas are going to come from. This one came from two friends in New York—one a writer and the other an engineer. They began talking about what the builders of the Brooklyn Bridge didn't know when they set out to build that structure, and I knew right away that was it. The Roeblings [primary characters in the book] came from Pittsburgh, near where I had grown up. My wife and I, when we were first married, lived in Brooklyn Heights, where the Roeblings had been. We walked the Brooklyn Bridge. I love bridges. I've always loved them architecturally.

I came out of that restaurant, went to the 42nd Street Library, and went upstairs to the card catalog set. I was propelled by an idea that was already taking form in my head. My only question was whether someone else had already written the book that I knew I was going to write. There were over 100 cards in the file under the category "Brooklyn Bridge," but none of them described the book that I had in mind. I was on my way.

LS: I thought it was interesting that three of your books dealt with water, whether it was a canal, a bridge, or a flood. Is there anything behind that?

DM: I've gotten some kidding about that, but I don't think so. Maybe there is some psychological feeling I have about water that I don't understand. I think that I felt compelled by both the Brooklyn Bridge and the Panama Canal to show that great constructive projects can be as powerful a story and as revealing of human nature as can such great destructive events as wars. I don't really know why I pick the subjects that I do. Something just clicks, and I just know this is the one I have to do. It's never based on publishers' market studies or the fact that it's going to fill a niche in some scholarly specialty that has not been done before. It's very subjective and visceral. I think it has to be that way, because if you're going to devote all that time and be marinated in it for two, three, five, or even 10 years, you have to have that desire. It's what moves you.

I couldn't understand why these subjects had not been done in the spirit that I wanted to approach them. I think that both of those stories were very American. In each of these big events, there is much to be seen about who we are and what we aspire to do. The cast of characters ranges all over the human spectrum. I found the principals extremely interesting characters. The people are what interested me. I know nothing about bridge engineering, hydraulics, strength of materials, or civil engineering, but I very quickly found that it's possible to understand them and they can be extremely interesting, particularly if you can find someone who will put them in the English language for you. I have had enormous good fortune in the help that I've received in all of my books. There are people who have explained things or looked over what I've written. I like all of that. I have not found being a writer a lonely pursuit, because there are so many people you must work with and interview. With the Brooklyn Bridge book, I had several civil engineers look at what I'd done, because sometimes you don't get it right.

I spent five and a half years in magazine writing and editorial work, and all the who, what, when, and why questions are part of what I do. I'm grateful I had that experience, because I think it taught me to work with a story—cast a net that's larger than academic historians are accustomed to. I use photographs as a resource. I try to go to the place where things happened and walk the walk, listen to the sounds, smell the air at night, or whatever it is. I try to study paintings, which are very revealing. For my book on John Adams, I spent days in galleries in London and here just looking at portraits and paintings of the multitude of characters I was dealing with.

LS: You went to great lengths to put yourself in the shoes of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson when you were researching that book. Why did you do that?

DM: I think you only really know something when you feel it. With the Panama book, it was all well and good to sit in a nice, comfortable study and write about the difficulties of working in the heat and the rain of Panama, but you have to go down and feel and see what it was like in human terms. Find out what they were up against in a way that maybe you've never experienced before. And what did the world they struggled in look like? To me, that's part of the fun of it and the joy of it. Some people think there's diplomatic history and there's life, and there's business history and there's life, or there's presidential history and there's life. Life is always mixed up with it. And personality is always a determinant. Always. If you don't understand the natures, the personalities, the failings, the backgrounds of the people involved, you don't understand why things happened the way they did. History is about life. It's awful when the life is squeezed out of it and there's no flavor left, no uncertainties, no horsing around. It always disturbed me how many biographers never gave their subjects a chance to eat. You can tell a lot about people by how they eat, what they eat, and what kind of table manners they have.

LS: Your first biography was about Theodore Roosevelt. You had already done seven books. What drew you into biography?

DM: I had become quite interested in Roosevelt. I began looking into his childhood and the formative time of his life. It was his metamorphosis that fascinated me. This frightened little boy, who was afraid of his shadow, went through this extraordinary transformation to become the symbol of American vitality in the early part of the 20th century. How did that happen? Who did it, and what made it happen? He didn't do it alone. There's no such thing as a self-made person. We're shaped by lots of influences, including other people of all kinds. That interested me.

LS: What were the common bonds between Roosevelt, Truman, and Adams?

DM: None of the three appeared, in a conspicuous way, to be a sure winner. The little, frightened, asthmatic child who is not expected to win and surprises everybody, including himself. It was the idea that Harry Truman of Independence, Missouri—the failed haberdasher, the stooge of Pendergast machine, etc.—would follow in the footsteps of the great Franklin Roosevelt. Somebody once said that my books were all about courage. Maybe that's so, but I'm not sure. I certainly admire courage in people, particularly people who have the courage of their convictions.

My books are also about fathers and sons. That's a big subject with me. I'm not sure exactly why, but it has been. I think that probably has to do with my having had the experience of being a father more than a son. The Roeblings were father and son, the Gillespes were father and son, and the Adamses were father and son. My books are also about strong women—Emily Roebling, in the book about the Brooklyn Bridge, and, certainly, Abigail Adams, who is one of the most interesting and admirable people I have ever written about from that time.

I don't mean to say I just want to write about admirable people. None of these people was perfect. None was a saint, thank God. They made mistakes and they did stupid things, each and every one of them. I also loved writing about Boss Tweed and writing about some of the scamps and downright scoundrels. I like to write about life and about the human condition.

LS: I read once that you think students don't appreciate history anymore. What do you think of the way history is taught in schools now?

DM: We have a generation of young people who are historically illiterate. This is a serious problem, and it's been apparent for about 20 years. Fortunately, there's some progress now. There's going to be a major federal government effort to improve the teaching of teachers in our schools. We have too many young teachers from schools of education who major in education and then are assigned to teach subjects in which they have no knowledge. We have to go back to encouraging our schools of education and universities and colleges in general to have our future teachers major in a subject, so they know what they're talking about and they have the kind of enthusiasm that comes from knowledge of a subject. We've got to do something to improve the textbooks—so many of which are so deadly dull that they were designed to kill one's interest in history.

The example also has to be set at home. That may be the most important thing. We've got to start talking about history with our children and in front of our children. We've got to encourage them to read good books about history—books that a person would want to read. We have to take children to historic sites—presidential homes or battlefields or whatever. And we can all do that. We can also talk about that part of American history that has interested us most and who our historic heroes are in front of our children. I think the major emphasis should be on children in grade school, because that's when their minds are open and ready to absorb things. They want to learn, and there's no problem getting young people interested in history. Barbara Tuchman said it perfectly in two words, "Tell stories."

To hear more from David McCullough, attend his speech on Monday, June 9, at the 2003 SLA Conference in New York.

conference countdown

New York, New York!

On a budget for the SLA Annual Conference? New York has the reputation of being an expensive city to visit, but there are many ways to experience New York without breaking the bank. Here are some low-cost and no-cost activities that are rich in experience but easy on the pocketbook.

Big Apple Greeter
Make arrangements to have a real New Yorker show you around the city. Volunteer tour guides are experienced locals who will show you around their favorite neighborhoods at no charge. Reserve this service in advance at www.bigapplegreeter.com.

Alliance for Downtown New York
This organization leads a free 90-minute walking tour that includes stops at Wall Street and the New York Stock Exchange. The group meets in front of the National Museum of the American Indian (a free museum). For more information, go to www.downtownny.org.

Central Park Conservancy Tours
(www.centralparknyc.org):
Free volunteer walking tours cover the park's history, ecology, and design.

Queens Borough Public Library
(www.queenslibrary.org)
Free tours, lectures, and concerts.

Village Alliance
(www.villagealliance.org)
Free tours of 8th Street and St. Mark's Place in the East Village.

Forbes Magazine Galleries
(62 Fifth Avenue)
The Forbes Galleries are free—view historic toys, presidential papers, paintings, Faberge eggs, and other objets d'art.

Hispanic Society of America
A free museum and reference library that focuses on the art, literature, and culture of Spain, Portugal, the Philippines, and Latin America. Features art by Goya, El Greco, and Velázquez. For more information, go to www.hispanicsociety.org.

Beaux Arts New York Public Library **(www.nypl.org)**
This famous library is open to the public and has a variety of special expositions.

Museum of American Folk Art
(www.folkartmuseum.org)
Enjoy free access to folk paintings, furniture, quilts, and other decorative arts.

New York Botanical Garden
(www.nybg.org)
Free admission on Wednesday and Saturday, 10 am to noon.

New York Hall of Science
(www.nyhallsci.org.)
Free admission September through June.

New York Mercantile Exchange
Watch millions of dollars worth of commodities change hands. For more information, go to http://www.nymex.com.

Grand Central Terminal
(www.grandcentralterminal.com)
Tours conducted by Jones Lang LaSalle management company are given Saturdays and Sundays at 11 am in the summer. The one-hour historical free walking tour of the building meets at the clock at Grand Central's round information booth.

Bryant Park
(www.bryantpark.org)
Take a free tour of the 34th Street area Thursdays at 12:30 pm. Meet at the Empire State Building. Bryant Park garden tours are also offered.

New York Unearthed
(www.southstseaport.org)
The only museum dedicated to New York's archaeological heritage. Visitors can view 5,000 years of New York history. View dioramas and the archaeological artifacts and touch a three-dimensional cross section of an archaeological site. Watch archaeologists and conservators at work in a glass-enclosed lab. 17 State Street (Battery Park). Open Monday–Friday, 12 noon–5 pm.

Sony Wonder Technology Lab
(www.sonywondertechlab.com)
See the future of technology—where high-tech interactive exhibits thrill kids of all ages.

Museum Mile Festival
(www.museummile.org)
Scheduled to take place the second Tuesday in June along Fifth Avenue from 82nd to 104th Street. Museums on this stretch, including the Guggenheim Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, will be free and open to the public from 6 pm to 9 pm. The festival includes entertainment.

Experience the SLA Annual Conference in June. Exceptional deals are available everywhere in New York City—and they're waiting for you!

Information on these attractions was provided by NYC & Company. For more information on New York, contact NYC & Company at www.nycvisit.com.

communications outlook

Reach Your Audience with a Precise Message

Information comes at us from all directions. Every time you turn around, you are bombarded with some form of information trying to get your attention. As an information professional, you are trained to chop, hack, and navigate your way through the thickest content to get to what you are looking for.

But have you ever been on the other side of the situation? Have you ever had to convey a message about a product, service, or event? It's more difficult than many people think to reach an audience and convey a message. More than 73 percent of corporate marketing executives admit that they have trouble getting and keeping a customer's attention. The key to this failure is faulty messages.

The most important factor in crafting a message is identifying what is important to your organization and to the audience you are attempting to reach. It is critical to design the message with your target audience in mind. To affect their beliefs or attitudes, you must know what they currently believe. This information is gained through research. What are the characteristics and attitudes of your prospective audience? Demographics such as education, economics, occupation, location, religion, social class, and political affiliation will affect how a target audience will receive and perceive your message.

Your message must be applicable, believable, realistic, and convincing. It must be expressed clearly and understandably, using familiar words and phrases. You must convince the receivers that the information you are presenting is meaningful to them.

Explain the main points without unnecessary details. A bullet format is usually effective because it conveys the essence of the information in a highly readable form. To come up with a bullet list, write down all the key facts about the topic, then combine and condense the information down to three or four bullet points that deliver the information your audience really needs to know.

What makes a message unique? Impact. Many mass communication messages "wash over" the audience because they are so common or so obvious. A message with impact can break through the screen of indifference and focus the audience's attention. It has the stopping power that comes from an intriguing idea; it stops people because it is something they have never thought of before. News is particularly good at stopping people, as are messages with high emotional power. But to have an impact on attitudes, messages must be relevant; in other words, they have to mean something to the target audience.

Some guidelines for successful communication:

- **Communicate *with* people, not *at* them. This will make them less defensive about receiving the message.**
- **Localize your message.**
- **Use many communication vehicles—the message has more meaning when it is delivered in different forms.**
- **Maintain consistency.**
- **Don't use propaganda to make your point. Let the receivers make up their own minds, but provide them with good information that will lead them to your message.**
- **Maintain credibility.**

index of advertisers

coming events

Join Us June 7–12 for SLA's 94th Annual Conference in New York!

April

APLIC-I (Association for Population/Family Planning Libraries and Information Centers-International) Conference
April 28–30
Minneapolis, MN
http://www.aplici.org/conferences/conferences.htm

May

Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP) 17th Annual Conference
May 1–4
Providence, RI
http://www.aiip.org/Conference/2003/index.html

Medical Library Association (MLA)
May 2–7
San Diego, CA
www.mlanet.org

June

SLA 2003 Annual Conference
June 7–12
New York, NY
www.sla.org

American Society of Indexers 34th Annual Conference
June 19–22
Vancouver, BC, Canada
www.asindexing.org

American Library Association (ALA)/Canadian Library Association (CLA)
June 21–24
Toronto, Canada
www.ala.org or www.cla.com.ca

August

69th International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) General Conference and Council
August 1–9
Berlin, Germany
www.ifla.org

Association for Computing Machinery
HyperText 03
August 26–30
Nottingham, UK
http://www.ht03.org